

Q1.11.6.1 Applicant Local Highway Authorities Interested Parties Providing opportunities for NMUs To what extent does the Proposed Development comply with the NPS NN paragraphs 3.3, 3.17, 5.205 and 5.216, and any other relevant policies, which relate to providing opportunities for walking and mitigating impacts for non-motorised users? To what extent have pre-existing severance issues, within the extent of the proposed scheme, been addressed as part of the Proposed Development?

The BHS believes that to comply with paragraph 3.3 there is more that can be done by the applicant to mitigate the environmental and social impacts of these proposals. The BHS believes the applicant has shown reasonable endeavours to address (any) existing severance issues that act as a barrier to non-motorised users inline with paragraph 5.205.

According to paragraph 5.216, where development will worsen accessibility, such impacts should be mitigated so far as reasonably possible. There is a very strong expectation that impacts on accessibility for non-motorised users should be mitigated. The BHS believes that there are further opportunities to improve accessibility. The British Horse Society's report Making Ways for Horses "off-road Equestrian Access in England" Equestrian Access Forum August 2012, highlights the importance of horse riding for health and well being. Access for horse riders, which inevitably involves crossing roads, is central to riding activities without which the level of participation is likely to decline which will have a negative impact on the local economy (Making Ways for Horses "off-road Equestrian Access in England" Equestrian Access Forum August 2012). Importantly, consultation should take place with local stakeholders to understand where there is demand suppressed by lack of access including safe crossings. This demand does not appear in usage surveys. In Cambridgeshire, the equestrian industry contributes approx. £92 million to the local economy per annum demonstrating the need for good, safe, off road access and barrier crossings to support the rural economy.

Q1.11.6.2 Local Highway Authorities Interested Parties WCHAR Survey data The TA [APP-242, Section 2.21] explains that no new pedestrian, cyclist or equestrian usage data has been collected since July and August, 2016. Do LHAs and IPs consider that the information provided gives an acceptable and up to date picture of current usage by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders of the local road and PRow network?

The BHS believes that data collected in July and August 2016 would need to be recollected to show an up-to-date picture of current usage by walkers, cyclists and horse riders of the local road and PRow network. Since 2016 the number of users will have increased especially due to the coronavirus pandemic which needs to be reflected in this information. However, as mentioned previously, usage surveys do not reveal the extent of suppressed demand. Provision of linking paths and safe crossings together with connectivity of the network, could impact hugely on usage. In some ways, low equestrian usage is more likely to reflect a poor network rather than a lack of horse riders wanting to use the routes. Data showing the numbers of horses in the vicinity and therefore potential usage, should be included along with the actual usage data.